North Delta Improvements Group Meeting

Wednesday, September 29, 1999
9:00-11:00AM
Rm 1142, Resources Building

Expected Outcomes:
Update group on North Delta Improvement Efforts. Receive Agency and Stakeholder input on North Delta Issues.

- **Introductions and Last Meeting Minutes**
- **Distribute Revised White Paper and Summarize Revisions**
- **Review CALFED ERP Objectives in the North Delta**
- **Update on Environmental Agency Coordination and Input**
- **Update on Progress of the Mokelumne-Cosumnes Watershed Alliance**
- **Update on Status of McCormack-Williamson Tract**
- **Update on Progress of Delta Dredge and Reuse Strategy**
- **Discuss Next Meeting Date and Agenda**

D-013383

Draft Meeting Notes
CALFED Bay-Delta Program North Delta Improvements Sub-Team
August 18, 1999 at 9:00 am in Room 1142 of the Resources Building

Attendance List:

Margit Aramburu, Delta Protection Commission
Valerie Calegari, The Nature Conservancy
Scott Cantrell, Dept of Fish and Game
Rob Cooke, CALFED
Craig Couch, Sacramento County Water Resources Division
Paul Devereux, SAFCA
Mike Eaton, The Nature Conservancy
Bill Fakes, Corps of Engineers
Bellory Fong, CALFED
Walt Hoppe, private citizen
Gwen Knittweis, CALFED (chair)
Jinji Kobayashi, Reclamation Board
Grant Kreinberg, SAFCA
Mark Kubik, Ensign and Buckley Consulting Engineers
Dave Lawson, DWR Central District
Ellen Mantalica, UC Davis Watershed Center
Michael Norris, DWR Central District (minutes)
Charles Rairdan, Corps of Engineers
Michael Ramsbotham, Corps of Engineers / CALFED
Jim Shanks, Staten Island
Sally Shanks, Staten Island
Stan Soliday, CALFED
Frank Wernette, Dept of Fish and Game
Tom Zuckerman, Central Delta Water Agency

Gwen Knittweis convened the meeting and had the group introduce themselves. Gwen discussed the focus of the meeting and the North Delta "bundle" of actions that are being floated by CALFED as part of the EIR/EIS. There were no comments on the previous 7-21-99 meeting minutes from the sub-team.

Mike Eaton presented the first agenda item dealing with an update on the status of McCormack Williamson Tract. The Nature Conservancy (TNC) owns the Cosumnes River Preserve and is currently negotiating purchase of McCormack-Williamson Tract. The purchase is part of a Category III grant and escrow is expected to close on 9-12-99. Future alternatives for McCormack Williamson include continuing the farm lease or implementing a restoration program. TNC will be a facilitator for long-term planning for the area but does not want to be the lead agency. It is assumed that DWR and/or CALFED will be the lead agency. It was noted there is no funding for planning/engineering/design in contrast to what the White Paper said. In response to a question from Margit Aramburu, there was a brief explanation of the mission of the

D-013384

Cosumnes River Task Force, which was assembled after the 1997 floods to see what can be done with the Cosumnes system with respect to flood control. Levee setbacks are being considered.

There was discussion of how the Corps of Engineers fits into the various Cosumnes proposals. The Corps takes ideas from the Task Force and attempts to give them some physical sense.

Tom Zuckerman asked about the reach from Michigan Bar to the Mokelumne. What is the hypothesis? Are we trying to reduce peak flows? Mike didn't think the group had reached the stage of setting targets and goals yet. Mike is concerned about "what we can afford". Previous studies might be tweaked as part of a cost saving measure rather than reinventing the wheel.

There was discussion of modeling of the system and Mark Kubik was called upon for answers. Kubik explained that there is 112,000 cfs for the combined Mokelumne-Cosumnes system and it is assumed upstream levees do not fail before the water discharges into the San Joaquin River. The 1986 flood was measured at about 85,000 cfs and there was no accurate measurement of the 1997 flood. It was noted that the Cosumnes River Task Force assumes some levee failures so one can take advantage of floodplain storage. Walt Hoppe wondered if it would make much difference with the attenuation of the system although it might delay it a bit. Walt thought we might flatten out the curve but the water will still get there for the reach from Michigan Bar to Franklin Pond.

Gwen suggested doing a worst case scenario by assuming no upstream attenuation (via failures, etc.) and then going back and doing a more reasonable case scenario for the EIR/EIS.

Craig Couch noted the assumptions are fuzzy for the Mokelumne-Cosumnes system because the system is not operable. We don't know which levees will fail.

Walt Hoppe noted peak flows for the Mokelumne and Cosumnes system of 44,200 cfs for the Mokelumne River and 54,366 cfs for the Cosumnes River based on Corps hourly data.

Gwen Knittweis presented the next agenda item dealing with comments on the draft white paper. Margit had some conceptual comments that were summarized on a handout that would be useful in analyzing the various alternatives. Walt Hoppe had a comment on page 6 dealing with hydraulic flows. In response to the comment, Gwen had prepared some schematic diagrams showing the flows for the systems. The schematics were based on the 1990 North Delta EIR/EIS. Jim Shanks discussed how there was no freeboard in some areas during the 1997 floods and Tom Zuckerman recalled how it was marginal in some areas. Urbanization and channelization can produce a fire hose effect. Walt Hoppe had some maps to explain his concerns of how backup occurs at the confluence of the Mokelumne/Cosumnes systems and what happens when this occurs. Walt feels the

Lambert Road – Franklin Pond area is serving as a retention area for developments both to the north and south of the system.

Gwen Knittweis presented the next agenda item dealing with a review of Key Issues. In response to a question from Michael Ramsbotham, Gwen explained that some key issues might translate into criteria. Rob Cooke asked Frank Wernette how to better coordinate the North Delta bundle since Frank is in charge of the "South Delta bundle". Frank discussed agency involvement and how this is important. Margit Aramburu suggested substituting some participation with public outreach.

Sally Shanks discussed how some of the Key Issues were around 10 years ago from the prior study. Rob Cooke noted the old study put a price tag on the proposed alternative at around $250 million and that might be what killed it. The present study is trying to come in at around $100 million. Sally asked about dredging and why it is still being considered when it hasn't gone anywhere in 10 years. Margit attempted to answer the question and felt it can go somewhere now because we have a "new vision". Sally thought there is more potential for dredging on the south fork of the system. Tom Zuckerman thought there might need to be as much as 75 miles of dredging in the absence of the Grant Line Ag Barrier.

Valerie Calegari noted how any proposal of correcting flood problems in Franklin Pond can be interpreted as encouraging development and how this is discussed in Mike Eaton's comments on the white paper. Craig Couch discussed how Sacramento County has a policy of containing upstream increased flows on Morrison Creek. Couch thought that urbanization in the Delta is beyond the scope of this group.

With regards to the Key Issue dealing with seepage concerns, Sally Shanks suggested looking at previously flooded islands. Tom Zuckerman noted that any time we have a flooded island, there is seepage on the adjacent island.

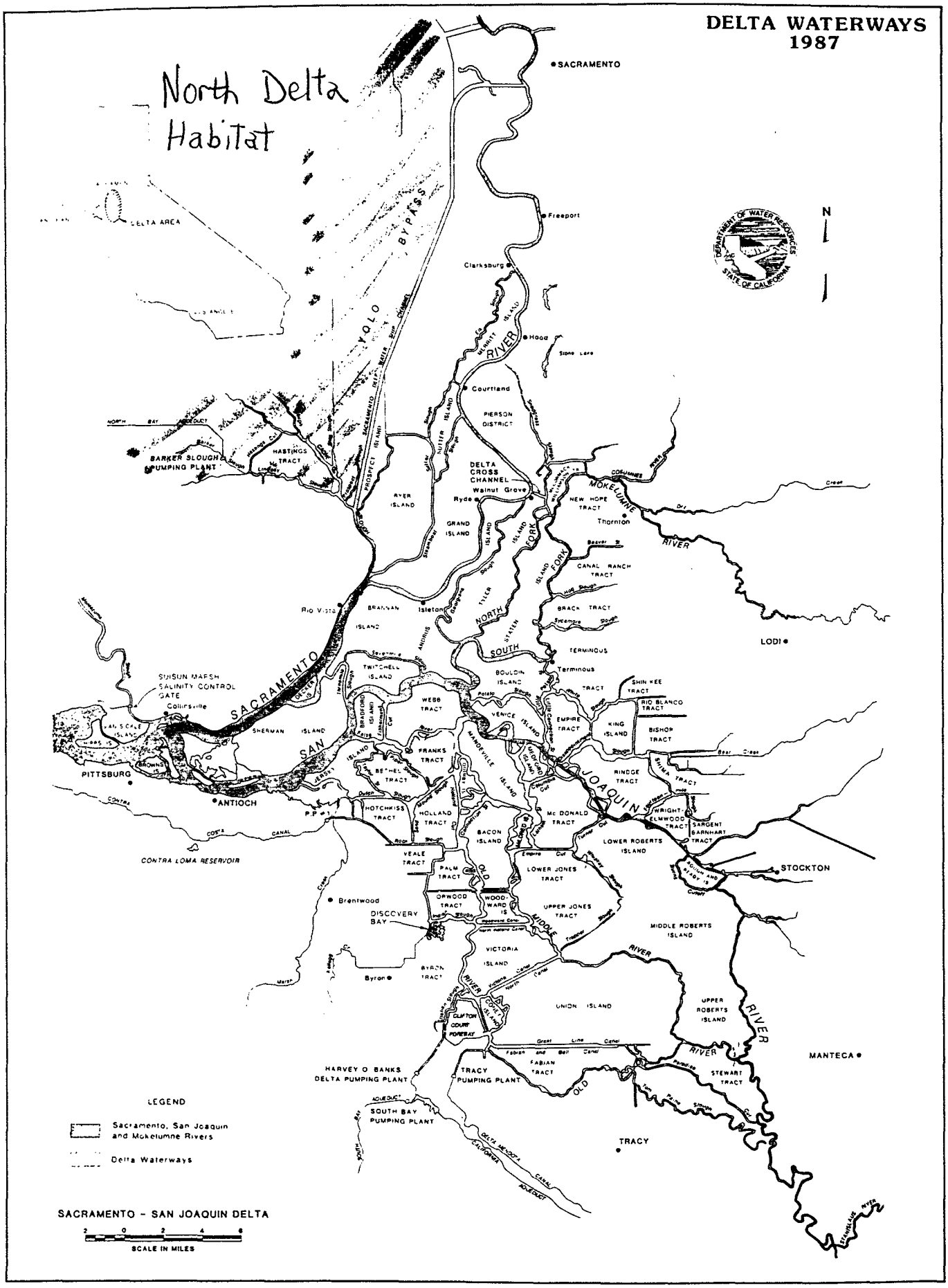
Michael Ramsbotham asked about when we get into a benefit/cost analysis stage. Gwen thought we had looked at it in an EIR/EIS type of perspective rather that the traditional Corps methodology. Stan Soliday noted he took a look at it at one time and got a 2 ½:1 ratio and anything over 1 is acceptable to the Corps.

Gwen Knittweis presented the next agenda item dealing with the Mokelumne-Cosumnes Watershed Alliance Group. There was a brief discussion of the intent of the group. The next meeting will be in Walnut Grove at the Jean Harvie Center on 9-21-99 from 1 – 4:30 pm. A web page has reportedly been started. Margit asked if the meeting was meant to be a more technical presentation or public outreach and Gwen thought it was meant to be more technical although it is open to the public.

Gwen Knittweis presented the next agenda item dealing with the updated Reflector List. There was a fresh handout available with the latest e-mail addresses of the group.

The next meeting of the sub-team will be on September 29, 1999 from 9-11.

Figure 2



D-013387

D-013387

North Delta Habitat Corridor

Objective: Restore a large, contiguous habitat corridor connecting a mosaic of tidal marsh, seasonal flood plain, riparian and upland grassland habitats.

Action 1: Increase the duration of Yolo Bypass flooding in winter and spring by modifying the Fremont Weir to allow lower-stage flows of the Sacramento River to pass through the Yolo Bypass.

Action 2: Construct a fish ladder at Fremont Weir to provide for ish passage through the Tule Canal/Toe Drain in the Sacramento River.

Action 3: Widen Tule Canal/Toe Drain channel and restore riparian vegetation

- Excavate a wider channel to convey winter and spring flows from the Fremont Weir

- Better connect the channel by enlarging existing culverts, etc, to allow fish passage at low flows

- Construct new channels connecting the Tule Canal/toe Drain with Putah Creek, Cache Creek, and Fremont Weir fish ladder

- restore riparian habitat along the Tule Canal/Toe Drain, including on the Sacramento Ship channel levees

- Evaluate the need to screen irrigation diversions from the Tule Canal/Toe Drain

Action 4: Allocate water to sustain higher summer and fall flows through the Tule Canal/Toe Drain.

Action 5: Conduct a feasibility analysis of opportunities to reduce fish stranding in the Bypass. Refine Actions 1,3, and 6, accordingly.

Action 6: Evaluate potential flood conveyance impacts from actions 1 to 4. Conduct a feasibility analysis to increase flood flow capacity in the a Yolo Bypass to compensate for lost flood capacity from Bypass restoration.

Action 7: Plan and implement restoration of tidal wetlands on Little Holland Tract.

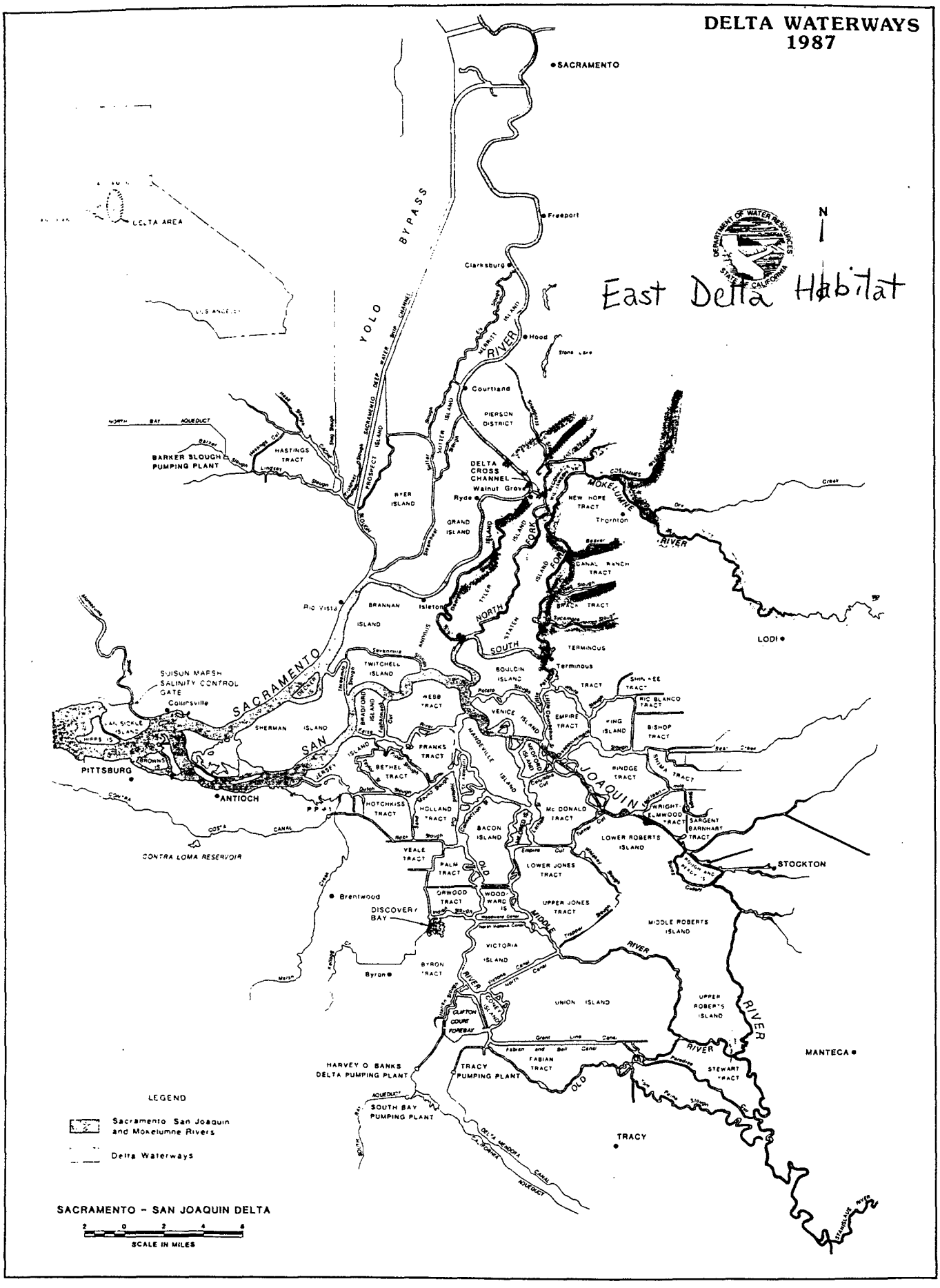
Action 8: Plan and implement restoration of tidal and seasonal wetlands on Prospect Island.

Action 9: Plan and implement restoration of tidal and seasonal wetlands on Liberty Island.

Action 10: Plan and implement restoration of tidal wetlands on the lower Yolo Bypass.

Action 11: Develop and implement measures to rehabilitate and restore a riparian and shaded riverine aquatic habitat corridor along Steamboat Slough

Figure 2



D—013389

D-013389

East Delta Habitat Corridor

Objective: Restore a large, contiguous corridor containing a mosaic of habitat types. Focus on tidal marsh and riparian habitat restoration on the South Fork of Mokelumne River, East Delta dead-end sloughs, Georgiana Slough, Snodgrass Slough and the Cosumnes River flood plain.

Action 1: Restore and rehabilitate a contiguous corridor of riparian, shaded riverine aquatic tidal freshwater and seasonal perennial habitat along the South fork of the Mokelumne River.

Action 2: Restore tidal marsh and riparian habitats on McCormack-Williamson Tract in conjunction with other flood control measures.

Action 3: Restore tidal marsh and riparian habitats on Georgiana Slough.

Action 4: Restore tidal and riparian habitats on East Delta sloughs in conjunction with control of non-native aquatic plants.

Action 5: Restore mid-channel islands and experiment with multiple techniques to allow natural sediment accretion to create new mid-channel islands and to protect mid-channel shallow-water habitat from boat wakes.

Action 6: Develop and implement incentives for wildlife-friendly agriculture on Staten Island.